In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1 to 6 and 8 without prejudice:

Claims 1 to 6.(canceled)

7.(previously presented) A method of screening a group of test substances for one or more ligands to be administered as effective ingredients in a method of treating neuro-degeneration, said test substances being selected from the group consisting of estrogens and compounds having estrogen activity, said method of screening comprising the steps of:

a) providing a cell-free or enzymatic assay system for each of said test substances, said cell-free or enzymatic assay system comprising an estrogen receptor for said test substances and a co-present steroid receptor coactivator-1, and fragments thereof;

b) experimentally determining half-maximally effective ligand concentrations ($EC_{50(ER+SRC)}$) for each of said test substances at which a physical-chemical interaction of said co-present steroid receptor coactivator-1, and said fragments thereof, and said estrogen receptor occurs in the cell-free or enzymatic system in the presence of each of said test substances;

c) selecting said one or more of said test substances if said half-maximally effective ligand concentration ($EC_{50(ER+SRC)}$) for said one or more of said test substances is greater than or equal to 100 nmol/l;

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d) providing a cellular or tissue assay system comprising an estrogen receptor and an estrogen receptor-driven reporter gene;

e) experimentally determining half-maximally effective ligand concentrations ($EC_{50(ER)}$) for said one or more test substances selected during the selecting of step c) at which said cellular or tissue assay system is transcriptionally activated in the presence of said one or more test substances; and

f) selecting those of said one or more test substances having said half-maximally-effective ligand concentrations that transcriptionally activate said cellular or tissue assay system and that are less than or equal to 10 nmol/l as said one or more ligands for said method of treating said neuro-degeneration.

Claim 8.(canceled)

9.(previously presented) A method of screening a group of test substances for one or more ligands to be administered as effective ingredients in a method of treating neuro-degeneration, said test substances being selected from the group consisting of estrogens and compounds having estrogen activity, said method of screening comprising the steps of:

a) providing a cell-free or enzymatic assay system for each of said test substances, said cell-free or enzymatic assay system comprising an estrogen receptor for said test substances and a co-present steroid receptor coactivator-1, and fragments thereof;

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b) experimentally determining half-maximally effective ligand concentrations ($EC_{50(ER+SRC)}$) for each of said test substances at which a physical-chemical interaction of said co-present steroid receptor coactivator-1, and said fragments thereof, and said estrogen receptor occurs in the cell-free or enzymatic system in the presence of each of said test substances;

c) selecting said one or more of said test substances if said half-maximally effective ligand concentration ($EC_{50(ER+SRC)}$) for said one or more of said test substances is greater than or equal to 100 nmol/l;

d) providing a cellular or tissue assay system comprising an estrogen receptor and an estrogen receptor-driven reporter gene;

e) experimentally determining half-maximally effective ligand concentrations ($EC_{50(ER)}$) for said one or more test substances selected during the selecting of step c) at which said cellular or tissue assay system is transcriptionally activated in the presence of said one or more test substances; and

f) selecting those of said one or more test substances having said half-maximally-effective ligand concentrations that transcriptionally activate said cellular or tissue assay system and that are less than or equal to 10 nmol/l as said one or more ligands for said method of treating said neuro-degeneration;

wherein said neuro-degeneration is an age-related cognitive disorder, affective disorder, Alzheimer's disease or cerebral ischemia/stroke.

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